

Message Text

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UNCLAS DUSSELDORF 717

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SUBJ: NRW/FDP PARTY CONVENTION

REF: A DUSSELDORF 710 B DUSSELDORF 660 C DUSSELDORF 650
D DUSSELDORF 649

1. THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE NORTH RHINE-WESTPHALIAN (NRW)
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FREE DEMOCRATIC PARTY (FDP) ON APRIL 22 TO 23, 1978
RECONFIRMED ITS GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE WITH THE SOCIAL
DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SPD) UNTIL 1980 BUT EMPHASIZED ITS
INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM OF CHOSING PARTNERS AT EACH
ELECTION. HORST-LUDWIG RIEMER, NRW MINISTER OF
ECONOMICS AND TRANSPORT WAS REELECTED CHAIRMAN; HIS

DEPUTIES ARE DR. BURKHARD HIRSCH, NRW INTERIOR MINISTER AND DR. OTTO GRAF LAMBSDORFF, FEDERAL MINISTER OF ECONOMICS. BOTH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC UNION (CDU) AND THE SPD WERE OBJECTS OF CRITICISM, BUT THE FORMER MORE THAN THE LATTER. DESPITE CONTRARY EXPECTATIONS, SCHOOL POLICH (SEE REFTEL B) THE POUILLAIN (SEE REFTEL D) AND REICHEL AFFAIRS (SEE REFTEL C) PROVED TO BE OF MARGINAL INTEREST ONLY.

2. IN A RESOLUTION THE CONVENTION DEPLORED THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT RULING ON CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS AS EXCEEDING THE COURT'S COMPETENCE BECAUSE IT CONTAINED A POLITICAL EVALUATION. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS CONDEMNING THE STATIONING OF NEUTRON BOMBS IN THE FRG WERE REFERRED TO THE NRW/FDP PARTY COMMITTEE FOR PROCESSING AND HANDLING. THE RESULT IS TO BE SUBMITTED BY WAY OF A MOTION TO THE FEDERAL FDP CONGRESS AT THE END OF 1978.

3. FOREIGN MINISTER HANS DIETRICH GENSCHER (FDP) PRAISED THE DEVELOPMENT AID OF THE FRG AND NOTED THAT IT EXCEEDED THE AGGREGATE AID OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNIST BLOC; HE CALLED FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS NOT ONLY IN THE EAST BUT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, INCLUDING SOUTH AFRICA. ECONOMICS MINISTER GRAF LAMBSDORFF EMPHASIZED THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DESIRES TO MAINTAIN THE ALLIANCE WITH THE UNITED STATES, WAS SHARPLY CRITICAL OF EUROPEAN PROTECTIONISM IN UNCLASSIFIED

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GENERAL AND BRITISH PROTECTIONISM IN PARTICULAR AND DECLARED THAT HENCE FORTH THE GERMANS WOULD NO LONGER BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT PROTECTIONISM FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC) IN BRUSSELS. THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS IN JUNE 1979 PLAYED AN UNUSUALLY SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE DEBATE.

4. COMMENTS: THE COALITION QUESTION WAS THE OVERRIDING DISCUSSION TOPIC AT THE CONVENTION AND PLEDGES OF SUPPORT UNTIL 1980 WERE NUMEROUS AND VOCIFEROUS ON THE PLATFORM. HOWEVER, MOST OF THE SPEAKERS WERE VERY CAREFUL TO KEEP THE OPTION OPEN FOR THE LANDTAG ELECTIONS IN 1980. WHEN THE NEWS ABOUT THE DEPOSITION OF MINISTER PRESIDENT KUEHN (SEE REFTEL A) IN MAY 1978 BROKE IN THE LOBBY, SOME DELEGATES EXPRESSED THE CONCERN THAT THOSE WHO TREATED KUEHN IN SUCH A SHABBY MANNER WOULD ACCORD THE SAME TREATMENT TO THE FDP AFTERWARDS. IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION SOME DELEGATES OF THE HIGHER PARTY AND GOVERNMENT HIERARCHY SHARED A FREQUENTLY EXPRESSED OPINION THAT THE OUTCOME OF THE FORTHCOMING LAND ELECTIONS IN LOWER SAXONY, WHERE THE FDP IS

FORMING A COALITION WITH THE CDU, WILL PREJUDICE A
COALITION COMMITMENT OF THE FDP IN NRW AND ALSO ON
FEDERAL LEVEL IN 1980. YET A DEEPER RESENTMENT
AGAINST THE CDU, ESPECIALLY AMONG YOUNGER DELEGATES,
BECAME EVIDENT; THERE WERE ALSO SOME ADVOCATES OF A
CHANGE, AMONG THE FOREMOST DUESSELDORF REGIERUNGS-
PRESIDENT DR. ACHIM ROHDE. THE NOW/FDP CONVENTION
IN 1980 WILL FINALLY DECIDE ON A NEW COALITION
COMMITMENT.DUX

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